Met Office

October 2002

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1961-1990.

UK overview

A cool and wet month across most of the UK. However, there were some exceptions to this, with the far south-east of England and north-west of Scotland, receiving less than normal rainfall.

Aberdeen had its wettest October reporting 230.4 mm, and the 4th wettest of any month, since readily available records back to 1924.

England and Wales diary of highlights

Mostly cold wet and windy after a warm dry start. Some overnight frost later in the month.

1st to 10th Warm and mostly dry with sunny spells especially at first. Prestatyn (Clwyd) reached 23.8 °C on the 1st, however occasional rain affected some areas during the first few days. Thereafter the weather became mainly dry and sunny but there were some mist and fog patches around dawn. As low pressure moved away to Denmark on the 5th, a weak ridge of high pressure extending from north Scandinavia settled over the region for a few days. Atlantic fronts brought rain to south-west districts on the 8th and 9th as a low passed close by, reaching France by the 10th and bringing chilly ESE winds to many areas.

11th to 15th Unsettled, mostly cold, very wet and windy. A slow moving front gave very heavy rain to the north and north-west during the 11th and 12th. A low crossing southern areas on the 13th deposited large amounts of rain especially over south-west England and south Wales causing serious flooding in places. Pembrey Sands near Swansea received 72 mm in 12 hours. Another low gave heavy rain on the 15th in the south-west, Midlands, south-east and eastern counties with some places having their wettest October day on record. Dunkeswell in Devon totalled 120 mm in four days. A tornado at Torquay on the 15th damaged a church roof and uprooted trees, while others in Essex near Colchester and Maldon caused damage to outhouses.

16th to 19th A quieter interlude after rain cleared from East Anglia early on 16th, Lowestoft had 63 mm in 24 hours from some thundery outbreaks. Thereafter it was mainly rather cold and dry with frost at night, apart from a few showers in the extreme south-east on the 17th and 18th. Rain spread back into the south-west later on the 19th.

20th to 24th A frosty start in the north, Shap (Cumbria) falling to -6.2 °C early on the 20th. More heavy rain (with local flooding) fell in the north on the 20th and 21st as a deep low tracked north-north-east over the UK. Mostly cold and showery after with some thunder and also some snow falling over the Peak District and Cumbria.

25th to 27th The 25th brought gales and squally showers, some with thunder, as a vigorous low passed to the north. At Portchester (Hants) a tornado did much damage to roofs, garages, walls and fences. The 26th was quieter but rain and thunder affected the south-west later. On the 27th a deep depression moved from south-west Ireland to north-east England bringing rain and storm force winds; Mumbles near Swansea had a gust of 84 knots. There were some fatalities and widespread damage to trees and power lines bringing disruption to road and rail networks.

28th to 31st Dry at first, then occasional rain with patchy mist, hill and coastal fog from the 29th to the 31st .

This has been the first month since December 2001 to be colder than average.

Scotland diary of highlights

Cold and unsettled, after a warm and dry start.

The dry and warm weather of September continued for the first ten days of October, with southerly or south-easterly winds. Thereafter the weather became much colder, with an anticyclone over Greenland directing an Arctic airstream towards Scotland. Active and slow moving fronts produced two episodes of heavy rain in the east and south.

October started warm, with southerly winds giving temperatures exceeding 21 °C in places on the first two days. Mainly dry and uneventful weather continued up to the 10th, with a Scandinavian anticyclone keeping fronts at bay.

On the 11th and 12th Atlantic fronts pushed slowly across Scotland, depositing much rain. There was 74 mm at Dundrennan on the 11th and 58 mm at Inverbervie the next day.

From the 13th to the 20th cold NE winds backed slowly to the north, bringing night frosts. Showers affected north and north-eastern districts, and there was a good deal of sunshine in central and southern parts. It became progressively colder, with the temperature falling to -7.5 °C at Tyndrum and Tallish Bridge on the 20th.

On the 21st and 22nd a deep depression passed from Ireland to the North Sea, bringing much rain south-east of the Great Glen. Two-day totals amounted to 78.8 mm at Charterhall and 83.2 mm at Aberdeen.

During the last week the belt of most disturbed weather lay to the south of Scotland, which stayed in the cold air with light winds. The weather was variable, with periods of rain alternating with clear, frosty spells.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

Wet and cool.

Unsettled conditions, particularly during the latter part of the month, made this a wet and cool October in all areas of the province. Sunshine values were however close to average.

1st to 7th Very mild with above average temperatures both by day and night. Scattered showers were recorded through much of this period, however a weak weather front brought a band of more persistent rainfall to all areas on the 2nd. The 3rd was then a very sunny day, while little or no sunshine was recorded in many areas on the 2nd, 5th and 6th.

8th to 12th Unsettled with temperatures close to normal for the time of year. The 9th however, proved to be a largely dry day, while the 12th was one of scattered showers and good spells of sunshine. Frontal systems brought bands of persistent and often quite heavy rain on the 8th, 10th and 11th. Indeed the 11th proved to be one of the wettest days of the month, with almost 25 mm of rainfall recorded in many locations on this date alone.

13th to 19th Cool with below average temperatures and occurrences of both air and ground frosts. Scattered showers and sunny spells dominated throughout this period, with the 16th and 18th proving to be two of the sunniest days of the month in all areas.

20th to 26th Very unsettled with frequent periods of persistent moderate to heavy rainfall leading to localised

flooding in many areas. Typically between 50 and 100 mm of rainfall was recorded between the 20th and 22nd and indeed in parts of the Mourne Mountains almost 150 mm of rainfall was recorded during this period. Almost 25 mm of rainfall was also recorded in many places on the 24th and 26th, making the rainfall totals over this one-week period typically four to six times what could be expected for the time of year. Temperatures also fell below average during this spell, with further occurrences of air and ground frosts on the morning of the 20th and widespread ground frosts on the morning of the 24th.

27th to 31st Cool with bands of rain and showery conditions interspersed with some good spells of sunshine. Widespread ground frosts and isolated air frosts were also recorded during this period.

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